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ABSTRACT

This guide is the second in a series of guidelines designed to be a framework for positive action at the school site and in the classroom through the High Schools That Work (HSTW) program, an effort to raise the achievement of career-bound students. It focuses on site-tested ways to organize new teams and rejuvenate existing teams. It recommends a team structure designed to help accomplish the goals of the HSTW program. The case for creating teams is followed by descriptions of team models designed for HSTW sites that consist of multiple schools working together or a single schools. Team organization guidelines set forth the membership, mission, and charges for the following single-school or multischool teams: overall site team, school implementation team, curriculum focus team, staff development focus team, guidance and public information focus team, and evaluation focus team. Suggestions are offered for the critical first 3 months during which the groundwork for successful teams is laid. A checklist for tracking team progress is provided. Keys to successful teams and a successful team leader are listed. A checklist for team players lists behaviors. A summary of problems and possible solutions concludes the guide. (YLB)

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ED 381 694

SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

#2
SCHOOL SITE TEAMS

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Creating an Effective Team Structure for Achieving High Schools That Work *Goals*

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"We waste a lot of time in meetings."

"What are we supposed to do today?"

"What happened to recommendations from our last meeting?"

"Here we go again!"

All of us have been involved in groups that did not produce—that took time and effort yet left us feeling "flat," disappointed, and frustrated with the results. So—why create teams?

The *High Schools That Work* program calls for a comprehensive "whole school" revitalization. Words like "revise," "eliminate," and "require" appear in the program's key practices. They all mean change—for teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the business community.

Change—no matter how positive the outcome—cannot be imposed from above. Those who will feel the impact of the change must be involved from the beginning. Engage them. Empower them to be the agents of change. Establish a team structure that will enable teachers, administrators, students, parents, and business community leaders to contribute to change in a meaningful way. Create "teams that work"!

Most of the successful *High Schools That Work* sites interviewed for this publication said they created a school environment that supported and rewarded a team approach to change. They found that it was in the work of teams that the vision of *High Schools That Work* is translated and woven into the fabric of daily life at school. Teams make it possible for academic and vocational teachers and the community to work together to raise the achievement of career-bound students.

In this publication, the focus is on site-tested ways to organize new teams and rejuvenate existing teams.

The team structure we recommend is designed to help accomplish the goals of the *High Schools That Work* program. We will also discuss strategies for effective community involvement in teams.

THE CASE FOR CREATING TEAMS

- **People "Buy In" When They Are Involved.** People tend to be against what they do not know. When involved in planning and implementing, they feel they have a "stake" in the outcome. They work hard to ensure success.
- **People Feel Empowered To Act.** When you create a team structure, you make a powerful statement. You say to others, "Your views and needs are important to the success of this endeavor. We need you." Team members feel they are more in control of their own destinies. Morale, expectations, and output go up!
- **A Team Structure Builds Consensus for Change.** A consensus is a decision hammered out by permitting everyone to have a "say." Not everyone has to agree initially, but a small group structure invites discussion and encourages shared decision-making. Participation in decision-making increases acceptance.
- **A Team Structure Provides a Way To Involve More People.** A dynamic team process will gradually increase the number of individuals involved and committed to the goals and key practices. A school/community team membership that reflects the diversity and resources of

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SREB-STATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CONSORTIUM
HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK PROGRAM

Goals

- To increase the mathematics, science, and communication achievement and the application of learning for career-bound students to the national average of all students.
- To integrate the essential content of traditional college preparatory studies—math, science, and language arts—with vocational and technical studies, by creating conditions that support school leaders and teachers in carrying out certain key practices.

Key Practices

- Setting higher expectations and getting career-bound students to meet them;
- Increasing access to challenging vocational studies, with a major emphasis on using high-level math, science, language arts, and problem-solving competencies in the context of modern business and technical studies;
- Increasing access to academic studies that teach the essential concepts from the college preparatory curriculum through functional and applied strategies that enable students to see the relationship between course content and future roles they may envision for themselves;
- Having students complete a challenging and related program of study, including three courses in mathematics and three in science, with at least two credits in each course equivalent in content to courses offered in the college preparatory program, and having students complete at least four courses in a vocational major and two courses in related areas;
- Having an organizational structure and schedule that enable academic and vocational teachers to have the time to plan and deliver an integrated curriculum aimed at teaching high-status academic and technical content;
- Having each student actively engaged in the learning process;
- Involving each student and his/her parent in an individualized advisement system aimed at ensuring that each student completes an accelerated and coherent program of academic study with a vocational or academic major;
- Providing a structured system of extra help to enable career-bound students to complete successfully an accelerated program of study that includes high-level academic content and a major;
- Using student assessment and program evaluation information to check and improve the curriculum, instruction, school climate, organization, and management.

the whole community will create broad-based support for your goals.

- **The Organized Task Focus Enables Teachers To Work Most Effectively with Community and Postsecondary Leaders.** Working together on shared goals develops practical, focused, meaningful involvement. Team members build a history of mutual success that helps bridge traditional obstacles—distance, changing worksite requirements, varying standards, and "turf" issues—which often work against school/community partnerships.

- **A Team Structure Establishes Quality Time for Teachers To Create a New Vision.** *High Schools That Work* site leaders report that their biggest challenge is finding time for teachers to work together. Opportunities for professional collaboration are rare in the high school setting. A team structure provides a period of time for thoughtful exchange necessary to create and implement substantive changes.

- **A Team Structure Builds a Smooth Transition from *What Is* to *What Ought To Be.*** A team can be a sounding board or "vision check" to ensure that initiatives are consistent with the goals and key practices of *High Schools That Work*. Every initiative must be based on the answers to:

  - Does this activity improve the achievement of career-bound students in math, science, and communication?
  - Will it accelerate what is expected of career-bound students?
  - Does it represent the type of high school experience I would want for my children?

  Team processing ensures that proposed solutions adopted by the team are aimed at raising the academic foundations of career-bound students and providing all students access to high-status academic and vocational studies. It prevents the team from proposing merely another "slowed-down" course.

TEAM STRUCTURE

The *High Schools That Work* goals and key practices require coherent, coordinated planning and implementation. Doing this is a big job—one that calls for the creative energies of all involved. To be effective, this energy must be directed in an organized, phased approach to change. Like spokes of a wheel, a representative team structure divides the tasks and keeps the program moving forward. The connecting rim of the wheel is the shared sense of purpose.

The following team models are designed for *High Schools That Work* sites that consist of 1) multiple schools working together or 2) a single school. The models are based on "real life" experiences from successful *High Schools That Work* sites.

Multi-school Site Team Structure

A multi-school site includes one or more high schools joined in a coordinated initiative with an area vocational school. In this model, an Overall Site Team is composed of top-level representatives from the participating schools, postsecondary institutions, and business and industry. The team will develop and coordinate a unified action plan for achieving *High Schools That Work* goals among all the schools. The team is supported in its endeavors by four focus teams dealing with issues related to:

- Curriculum
- Staff Development
- Guidance and Public Information
- Evaluation

The purpose of focus teams is to unify efforts among the several schools. To increase communication and coordination, the leader of each focus team is a member of the site team, and each focus team is composed of representatives from each of the schools.

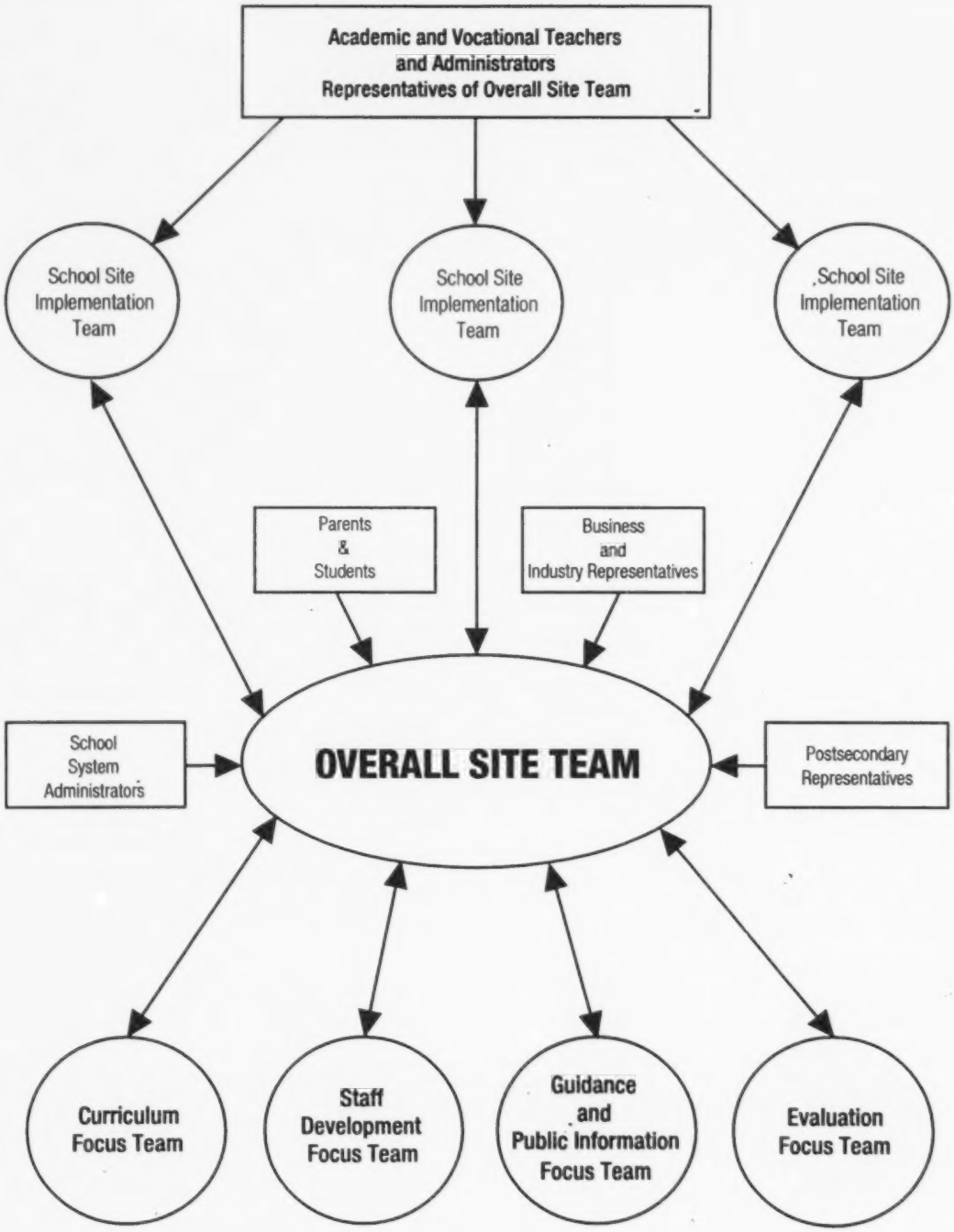
In addition to participating on the Overall Site Team and the four focus teams, each school in a multi-school model organizes its own School Site Implementation Team. This team is charged with implementing a school-specific plan of action to carry out the key practices. (See page 4.)

Single-school Site Team Structure

Single high school sites establish an Overall Site Team with representatives from academic and vocational areas, the business community, a postsecondary institution, and the school system's central office. The school superintendent and the president of the closest two-year college or technical institution serve on the team.

The site has four focus teams to deal with curriculum, staff development, guidance and public in-

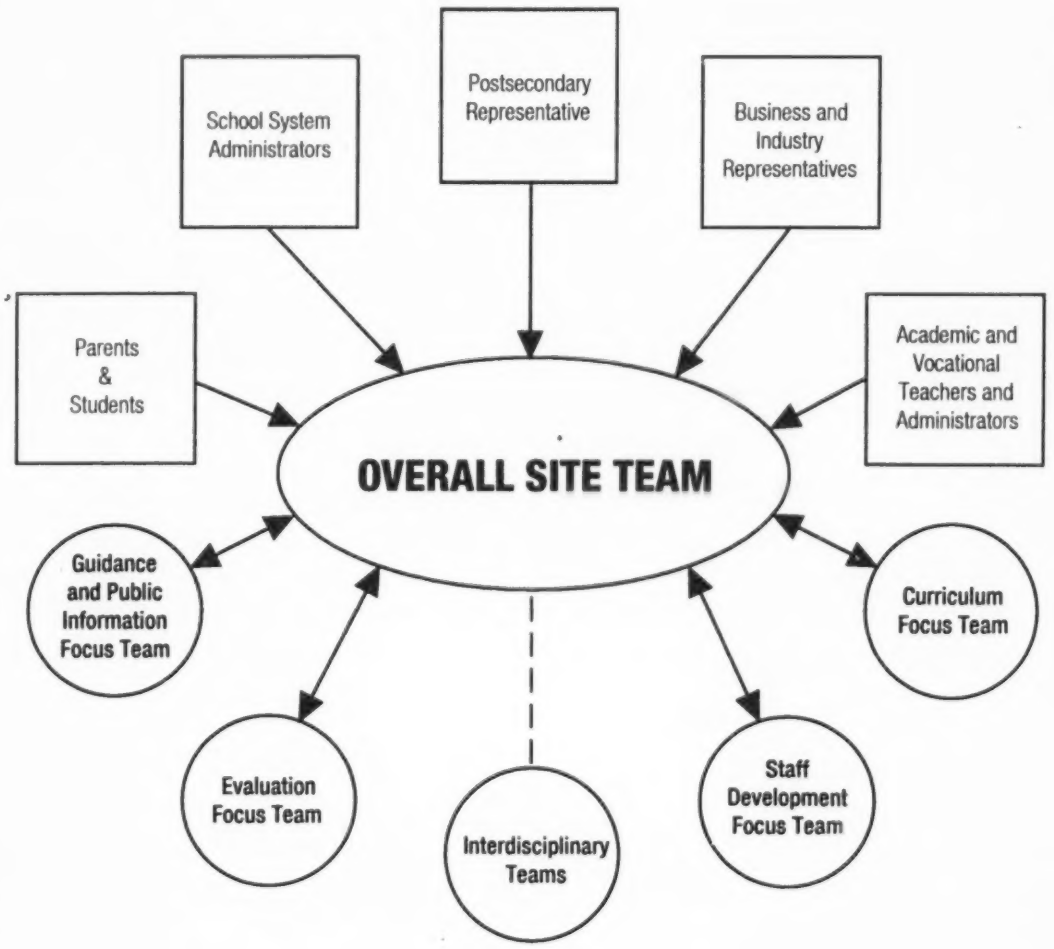
MULTI-SCHOOL SITE TEAM STRUCTURE



formation, and evaluation. Focus team members represent academic and vocational teachers, the business community, postsecondary education, and the central office. The leader of each focus team serves on the Overall Site Team.

Some *High Schools That Work* sites go beyond the basic structure to involve all or most of the faculty on interdisciplinary teams. These teams are organized around broad clusters of occupational or technical studies—for example, business/marketing and health/human services. This approach reinforces the *High Schools That Work* concept of "whole school change" and puts more people in leadership roles. In this option, each interdisciplinary team addresses ways to carry out the key practices.

SINGLE-SCHOOL SITE TEAM STRUCTURE



TEAM ORGANIZATION GUIDELINES

Teams need a clear mission and set of charges to effectively implement the *High Schools That Work* goals and key practices.

Overall Site Team for a Single-school Site or a Multi-school Site

Membership: Vocational and academic teachers, school administrators, business and community representatives, postsecondary institution representatives, parents, and students.

Mission: Develop and coordinate a site action plan to achieve the goals of the *High Schools That Work* program. Build a school/community partnership to advocate the "vision."

Charges:

1. Develop a unified, three-year action plan for achieving *High Schools That Work* goals. Revise the plan annually, and define specific yearly goals for implementing key practices.
2. Develop/support proposals aimed at raising expectations and accelerating the academic, problem-solving, and technical competencies of career-bound students.
3. Help participating schools link together to work as a coherent and integrated whole.
4. Establish ongoing two-way communication between the team and the entire faculty, the administration, and the focus teams.
5. Resolve problems that hamper communication, cooperative action, and accomplishment of the action plan. Develop and promote systems solutions.
6. Review and monitor focus team activities to ensure that actions are consistent with the *High Schools That Work* goals and key practices.
7. Advocate the *High Schools That Work* approach in media, business and community forums, and legislative bodies.

School Site Implementation Team for a School in a Multi-school Site

Membership: Vocational and academic teachers, administrators, representatives of the Overall Site Team.

Mission: Develop and implement a school-specific action plan to achieve the goals established by the Overall Site Team and the focus teams.

Charges:

1. Prioritize activities to address by the end of the school year based on the unique needs and resources at the school building level.
2. Develop a time line, assign responsibilities, and identify resources.
3. Monitor team member assignments through regular progress reporting.
4. Search for alternatives to obstacles hindering implementation of goals and key practices.
5. Develop a system of communication with the Overall Site Team, focus teams, and faculty.
6. Assign permanent or temporary focus teams as needed.

Curriculum Focus Team for Single-school Site or Multi-school Site

Membership: Academic and vocational teachers, curriculum specialists from secondary and postsecondary institutions, business community representatives, representatives of the Overall Site Team.

Mission: Develop an action plan to ensure that career-bound students complete a challenging, coherent sequence of academic courses with a vocational major.

Charges:

1. Assess needs, and identify how curriculum and instruction must change to achieve the goals of the *High Schools That Work* program.
2. Recommend standards for minimum course competencies, coherent course sequences for each major, instructional methodologies, and indicators for tracking the progress of sites in achieving the *High Schools That Work* criteria for a tech prep program of study.
3. Create or adapt courses that teach the essential content of college prep courses using new student-centered and applied learning strategies.
4. Ensure that career-bound students have access to courses designed to teach the essential content from the college prep curriculum in math, science, and language arts.
5. Study various models for integrating academic and vocational studies, and adopt or adapt a model appropriate for the site.
6. Devise a plan for vocational teachers to periodically review their courses to ensure that students are using high-level academic content to solve problems and perform tasks in their fields of study.
7. Create opportunities to reinforce among parents the assurance that vocational courses are high status.

Staff Development Focus Team for Single-school Site or Multi-school Site

Membership: Academic and vocational teachers, postsecondary representatives, business and community representatives responsible for human resource development, central office and departmental staff development specialists.

Mission: Plan, formulate, coordinate, and be an advocate for staff development activities that support the *High Schools That Work* goals.

Charges:

1. Work with representatives of the Evaluation focus team to establish an ongoing system for identifying staff development needs of teachers and school leaders by:
   - Studying the results of the SREB Teacher Survey.
   - Studying evaluation reports received by the site—student achievement levels in math, science, and reading; transcript analysis of vocational completers; and Student Questionnaire results.
   - Getting other teams to identify staff development needed to carry out their planned actions.
2. Establish training objectives and formal and informal training opportunities; identify resource persons; schedule staff workshops; and evaluate the effectiveness of the workshops.
3. For multiple-school model: Aid individual school sites with staff development to carry out their action plans as well as the unified efforts of all the schools involved.
4. Ensure that staff development objectives are related to *High Schools That Work* key practices and individual school site needs.
5. Support the efforts of individual teachers to participate in staff development experiences that further the goals and key practices of the *High Schools That Work* program.
6. Monitor long-term results of staff development activities based on implementation of key practices.
7. Develop quality standards that all sponsored staff development programs must meet.

Guidance and Public Information Focus Team for Single-school Site or Multi-school Site

Membership: Guidance counselors, vocational and academic teachers at middle and high schools, school or system public information director, community public relations and media representatives, parent-teacher-student association representatives, postsecondary representatives, business and community representatives.

Mission: Develop a plan for educating students and parents about the need for all students to take an accelerated program of study that culminates in either tech prep or college prep. The program should allow students to make decisions about the program at key points in their school experience.

Charges:

1. Assess parent, student, and business community assumptions about career-bound students.
2. Develop appropriate information and promotional materials to educate students and parents about the need for students to complete either a tech prep or college prep program of study.
3. Devise a way to help students and their parents develop a four-year educational plan with a process for annual parent/student review of the plan. The strategy must include a way for either a counselor or teacher advisor to meet individually with each student and his or her parents or guardians.
4. Develop and deliver student, teacher, and parent education/information activities that focus on the need for new workplace skills. Involve business members in the process.
5. Devise meaningful strategies to increase the involvement of parents and students in the planning and accomplishment of *High Schools That Work* key practices.
6. Develop a plan for helping students meet the requirements of postsecondary schools and work.

Evaluation Focus Team for a Single-school Site or Multi-school Site

Membership: Academic and vocational teachers, central office evaluation personnel, postsecondary institution representatives (evaluation specialists), business and community representatives.

Mission: Assess the degree to which the goals have been met, and provide the Overall Site Team with data to modify and adjust activities as needed.

Charges:

1. Develop a baseline portrait of student achievement levels.
2. Identify indicators the site will monitor annually.
3. Identify problems by using assessment information, including the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results, transcript analysis, Student Questionnaire, Teacher Survey, Student Follow-up Survey, and site annual reports and technical assistance reports.
4. Develop an annual evaluation plan based on the gaps between what is (baseline data) and what is desired (student achievement goals described in the action plan).
5. Devise and monitor a data collection process.
6. Assign problem statements to appropriate focus teams.
7. Advise the Overall Site Team and focus teams when immediate action is needed to address a problem situation.
8. Develop a method for sharing information with the whole faculty.

THE CRITICAL FIRST THREE MONTHS: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR SUCCESSFUL TEAMS

Do not assume that just because everyone has served on a team or committee in the past they know how to make *this* team a winner. The first three months in the life of a team are critical. You will lose time later if you do not take time to establish an operating team. More than just a group, a team is characterized by:

- Shared Goals
- Interdependence
- Commitment
- Accountability for Outcomes
- Common Operating Procedures
- Systematic and Regular Sharing of Information

The First Steps

Lay the groundwork to make your team a success! Use the Checklist for Tracking Team Progress as you develop your team.

CHECKLIST FOR TRACKING TEAM PROGRESS

Date	Initial Team Development Tasks
	Train Team Members. Many *High Schools That Work* sites report that they wish they had done a better job of orientation and training for all team leaders and members. The most successful sites identified training needs initially—even if informally—and conducted orientation and training. The initial and continuing team member education included orientation to the benefits and goals of the program, the rationale for team membership and competencies, team-building and trust-building, action planning, meeting skills, elements of applied academic learning, and other skill-related topics. Successful teams have ongoing team "maintenance" or "upkeep" procedures and are prepared to repeat the orientation process each time a new member joins the team.
	Clarify Goals and Roles. As a group, develop or adopt a mission and charges for the team (See Team Organization Guidelines on Pages 6-8). Create a clear "reason for being." Team plans and actions should be evaluated against the mission. The questions to ask constantly are: If we continue this action, will we accomplish our mission? Is this activity consistent with what the team is charged with doing? Do we see the big picture clearly? Will this proposal raise the academic, problem-solving, and technical competencies of career-bound students? How will the teams relate to the administration, other teachers, and the students? Clarify and seek agreement on roles and responsibilities of the Overall Site Team, the focus teams, and individual team members.
	Develop Operating Guidelines. A new team needs to establish guidelines for how it will function. How will we make decisions? When will we use consensus, and when will we use majority vote? How will we ensure the completion of work? How much time will members be expected to commit? How will we resolve conflicts within our team? How will we ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to provide input? How will we ensure that we follow our agenda?
	Build Relationships Right from the Beginning. The most successful teams we interviewed established team-building as a priority right from the beginning, with recognition for team accomplishment, time for sharing successes/problems, and special social events.

The First Meeting

The first meeting sets the stage for continued involvement of members, particularly business and community members. How can you make the first meeting successful? Simple things count!

1. Prepare and stick to an agenda. Make certain the first meeting begins and ends on time. You are setting a precedent.

2. Focus on the vision of the *High Schools That Work* program. Present the goals and key practices as clearly and dramatically as possible. Use a prestigious speaker. Prepare easy-to-read overhead transparencies. Focus on a few attention-getting statistics. Personalize the impact. Bring in a student, parent, or teacher to discuss their dreams or frustrations. Bring the message "home," with descriptions of benefits to *your* school and community.

3. Conclude with action to be taken before the next meeting. Everyone should feel that something is underway.

4. Don't neglect human needs. Make sure everyone has a written agenda, copies of goals and other materials, and a list of team members. Provide name tags, pads of paper, sharp pencils—and refreshments. Select a convenient site with handicapped access and plenty of parking. Vary the meeting site if possible—one team had a meeting at the leader's home.

WHAT MAKES A TEAM EFFECTIVE?

We asked site contacts to name three keys to successful teams. Their answers are listed below. The first three keys were mentioned most often.

- **Common Purpose—Common Priorities—Clear Charges.** The vision and tasks of the team have been defined and are repeated and clarified frequently. Members of each team and focus team understand their responsibilities in making the vision a reality. There is a written action plan. People feel they are engaged in a meaningful and important activity.

- **Active Administrative Involvement.** Top-level administrators are key players on the teams. Administrators establish a supportive environment for team activities by allowing time for meetings, recognizing accomplishments, acting as advocates for team goals, and rewarding the team approach. Administrators allow release time, provide substitutes, and facilitate school meeting time and location.

- **Diverse Membership.** Seek a balance of the following:

  - **Positives and negatives.** One site coordinator suggests, "...two positives for every negative." That way you involve those who probably would not support a new program with those who are most enthusiastic.

  - **Academic and vocational teachers.** Put both on every team. Avoid the "we/they" trap.

  - **School and business/community.** Several site contacts were adamant that you must involve business and industry leaders from the community in meaningful ways from the very beginning. It works!

  Capitalize on individual differences and strengths. Each member is an expert in something or has a special skill that will help the team.

- **Commitment to Action.** Teams not only need to meet; they need to move forward with the actions they decide upon. There should be a way to track progress toward the completion of tasks. Members must feel responsible for following through.

- **Tangible Results.** People need to know how a learning activity relates to "real" situations. One site makes the results of Overall Site Team action a visible part of each meeting: Teachers and students tell success stories that touch the heart—and the head.

- **Productive Meetings.**

  - **Set an agenda, and stick to it.** Announce in the beginning what the meeting will accomplish, and conclude by summarizing what was accomplished. Don't go overtime, or you may not see your members from business and industry again.

- **Make action a part of each meeting agenda.** Members need to see that something has happened since the last meeting. Make sure an action to be taken is assigned to each issue. Share information electronically between meetings so that meeting time is spent in solving problems and making decisions.

- **Write minutes of each meeting.** Minutes are a written record of goal milestones. Keep minutes in a uniform style providing date, place, members present, and all pertinent team action. Make sure each member gets a timely copy of the minutes. Some sites use minutes to inform those outside the team about progress being made.

- **Hold regular meetings.** The Overall Site Team should meet at least monthly to review progress. Focus teams should meet at least bimonthly. Teams that seldom meet do not take their charges seriously. Remind all team members that what happens between meetings will determine the team's success.

- **Require attendance**. Two consecutive absences by team members should be the basis for replacing them on the team.

- **Members See Themselves as a Team.** One site coordinator said, "Our team members leave their differences at the door." Members feel a sense of trust and security. They admit freely to needing more information or making a mistake. People listen to and respect each other's opinions. Team members boost each other's morale. Teamwork is part of the philosophy of the school.

- **Empowerment.** Teams function when they are seen as important. Recognize and publicize their decisions. The most important element is follow-through support for team actions.

- **Time for Reflection and Improvement.** At least twice a year, the team should stop to assess its performance. Are you spending enough time in activities and discussions related to your goals? Devise a plan for making needed improvements.

- **Effective Leadership.** Most of the site teams we interviewed selected their own team leaders. What leadership characteristics did they look for? We found a number of factors that defined effective site leadership.

WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL TEAM LEADER?

- **Sense of purpose:** Leaders are "keepers of the vision." All sites agree that a leader should have a clear purpose. The team leader makes sure there is a member who acts as a facilitator to keep the team on task, a recorder to note agreements and actions, and a timekeeper.

A JOB DESCRIPTION FOR AN EFFECTIVE TEAM LEADER

Job Title: Effective Leader

Availability: Open to Anyone

1. Plan. Seek all available information. Define the group task, purpose, or goal. Make sure the group develops a workable plan.
2. Inform. Clarify the task and plan. Give new information to the group. Keep members "in the picture." Facilitate communication with other groups.
3. Direct. Maintain group standards. Influence tempo. Ensure that actions support goals. Keep discussion relevant. Prod the group to action.
4. Support. Express acceptance of members and their contributions. Create team spirit. Encourage reconciliation of differences. Find opportunities for positive cooperative experiences.
5. Evaluate. Check the feasibility of an idea. Test the consequences of a proposed solution. Help the group to evaluate its own performance.

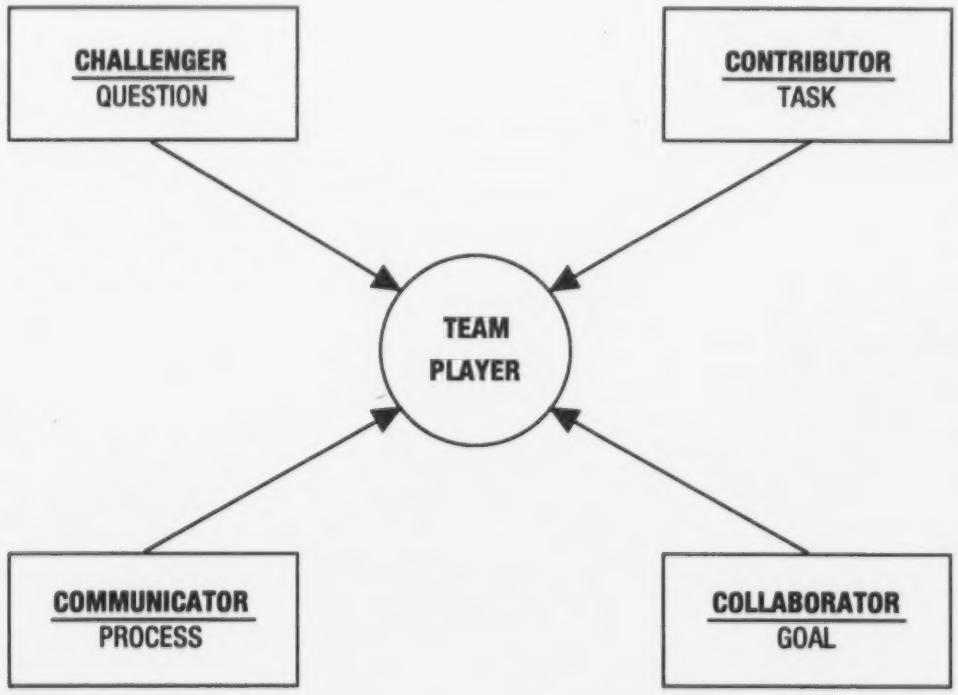
– Adapted from *Effective Teambuilding* by John Adair, published 1986 by Gower Publishing Company Ltd.

- **Interest:** One site contact said an effective leader should be a *stakeholder*, not a figurehead. A leader should demonstrate interest and willingness to commit time.
- **People skills:** Dealing successfully with people requires persistence, problem-solving skills, ability as a group facilitator, ability to empower others, and recognition of the best in others.
- **Expertise:** Many sites selected team leaders on the basis of expertise in a subject area. Some groups provided special training for team leaders in leadership, running a meeting, developing an action plan, or technical aspects of the program.

HOW CAN YOU BE AN EFFECTIVE TEAM MEMBER?

An effective team member is a team player. Effective members take personal responsibility for sharing leadership of the group and supporting the team leader. How can team members work together to ensure that goals are accomplished? The model illustrated below explores four effective team player styles (Parker, 1990). Most of us play more than one role. Using the Checklist for Team Players on the opposite page, note the behaviors you exhibit in working with groups.

FOUR TEAM PLAYER STYLES



Adapted from *Team Players and Team Work: The New Competitive Business Strategy* by Glenn M. Parker, published in 1990 by Jossey-Bass

CHECKLIST FOR TEAM PLAYERS

		✓
Challenger	1. Candidly shares views about the work of the team. 2. Pushes the team to set high ethical standards for work. 3. Speaks out even when views are contrary to those of a majority of the team. 4. Asks "why?" and "how?" and other relevant questions. 5. Challenges the team to take well-conceived risks.	
Communicator	1. Steps in to resolve process problems, such as conflict among team members or lack of involvement by some members. 2. Listens attentively, while withholding judgment, to all viewpoints. 3. Introduces humor and fun. 4. Recognizes and praises other team members. 5. Communicates enthusiasm. 6. Summarizes the status of discussions or proposes a possible consensus. 7. Helps members get to know each other.	
Collaborator	1. Helps the team establish long-term goals and clarify current objectives. 2. Helps the team see how its work fits into the total organization. 3. Encourages the team to establish milestones. 4. Pitches in to help team members who need assistance. 5. Discourages negative comments about members.	
Contributor	1. Freely shares all relevant information and opinions with other team members. 2. Pushes the team to set high standards and achieve top-level results. 3. Completes all team assignments. 4. Makes clear, concise, and useful presentations at team meetings. 5. Provides technical training for team members; serves as a mentor for new team members.	

Adapted from *Team Players and Team Work: The New Competitive Business Strategy* by Glenn M. Parker, published in 1990 by Jossey-Bass

PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR TEAMS

The following summary of problems and possible solutions is based on responses of *High Schools That Work* site contacts to the questions, "What obstacles did teams at your site encounter?" and "How did you overcome the obstacles?"

PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SOLUTION
People in power from postsecondary institutions do not seem to have a thorough understanding of the High Schools That Work *program.*	**Set up an information-sharing session with leaders of the postsecondary institution, and invite business and industry leaders from the team to attend. Business and industry leaders often can help "leverage" support from postsecondary institutions.**
Our teams have been in place for two years. Progress toward accomplishing our goals has slowed down.	**Consider holding a school/community fair or banquet highlighting the results of your project. Make certain that top-level school and community decision makers are there. Putting it all together may help teams see the "big picture."**
The team proposes actions, such as allowing three years for the school to implement applied math, that do not support the High Schools That Work *goals.*	**Have a "brainstorming" meeting to explore solutions to slow-downs in the accomplishment of goals. In the example given, have the team discuss ways to develop a system of extra help and time to assist students in meeting the requirements of high-level math, science, and English.**
We never have enough time for team meetings and collegiality.	**Arrange a common planning time for teachers serving on teams. Ask teachers who are not members of teams to donate their planning time to take on the responsibilities of teachers who are scheduled to meet with their teams. Hold meetings at night, or host breakfast meetings.**
Some teachers resist or are afraid of change. They are willing to sit and wait for "the pendulum to swing back again" and things to return to the way they were.	**Involve as many reluctant teachers as possible in needs assessment and team activity. Publicize achievements that reflect well on the school as a whole. Build confidence by building skills. Identify skill deficiencies, and increase access to staff development. Ask and insist that teachers be "constant learners." Establish the understanding that this is "whole school" change—a different, but more effective, way of operating.**

PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SOLUTION
Trust is low, and members are not open with each other.	**One site contact person recommended building trust "one step at a time." Create a school and team environment that supports open discussion and considers diverse points of view. Actively recruit previously uninvolved teachers to serve on teams.**
Decisions tend to be made by leaders with little meaningful involvement of members.	**Conduct training for all team leaders and members in consensus-style decision making. Establish and follow a practice of seriously considering everyone's ideas in reaching a consensus.**
Some faculty members continue to expect too little of career-bound students.	**Challenge the Guidance and Public Information focus team to use marketing techniques to raise school and community expectations for career-bound students. Ask business leaders and/or college professors to contribute to newspaper articles on the importance of a high-status program of study for all high school students. Ask students in applied academic courses and redesigned vocational courses to participate with teachers in radio talk shows to discuss how changes in what and how they are taught are contributing to increased achievement. Ask teachers to write brief reports of their visits to successful sites.**
Disagreements are aired in private conversations after the meeting.	**Make "rumor control" a priority for the group. Agree to bring all issues to the table so that members' views can be heard and discussed.**
Schools allow students to select courses from a "cafeteria menu" of low- and high-level offerings and then build the schedule. The range of choices encourages students to select easy courses.	**Use the *High Schools That Work* team structure to address the problem: Challenge the Evaluation focus team to identify for the Overall Site Team any practices contributing to a slowed-down curriculum. Challenge the Curriculum focus team to increase the number of sections of high-level courses and to decrease on an annual basis the number of sections of low-level courses.**
It's hard to describe our team's mission. We've lost our focus. If one of us came up with a mission statement, the other members might not agree.	**Retreat! Schedule a summer or weekend retreat for the specific purpose of re-developing a mission statement.**

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For more information, contact Gene Bottoms, Director, *High Schools That Work*, Southern Regional Education Board, (404) 875-9211.

The High Schools That Work *program is the nation's largest and fastest growing effort to raise the achievement of career-bound students. Created by the Southern Regional Education Board-State Vocational Education Consortium, the program includes school and school system sites in 19 states.*

These guidelines are based on the Consortium's experience with High Schools That Work *sites during the first five years of the program. The guidelines are designed to be a framework for positive action at the school site and in the classroom.*

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592 Tenth Street, N.W.
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